

REMARKS

In response to the Final Rejection Applicants file herewith a Request for Continued Examination. As set forth above, independent claim 1 is amended.

Claims 1-13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious in view of U.S. Patent 6,069,291 (Rossin et al.) further in view of U.S. Patent 4,229,411 (Kisters et al.). According to the Examiner, Rossin et al. discloses a process for the decomposition of perfluoroalkanes to HF and CO₂ by contacting, in the presence of oxygen, the perfluoroalkanes with a catalyst. Rossin further suggests caustic scrubbing following the reaction. According to the Examiner, Kisters et al. discloses a process and apparatus for the removal by absorption of noxious compounds from waste gases. Therefore the Examiner stated it would have been obvious to use the control method of Kisters et al. for the scrubbing step of Rossin et al. because the control method would automatically control the amount of neutralizing agent for the scrubbing step.

Applicants have amended claim 1 to overcome the rejection based on obviousness over Rossin and Kisters. Rossin et al. is directed to a catalytic process for the decomposition of perfluoroalkanes by contacting the perfluoroalkanes with aluminum oxide at a temperature ranging from about 400 °C to about 1000 °C. Rossin et al. discloses another embodiment wherein the perfluoroalkanes are contacted with aluminum oxide in the presence of water and an oxidizing agent with or without adding additional elements. Therefore, Rossin et al. describes a very specific process for the catalytic decomposition of perfluoroalkanes with aluminum oxide. In contrast, amended claim 1 specified that the waste gases are introduced into a combustion chamber with combustion gases and oxygen. The present invention uses a first and a second detector tailored to identify selected harmful substances (*see* Specification, page 5, line 3; page

8, line 1-2) and providing measuring signals which are used to adjust the operating parameters of the system including quantity of combustion gas, oxygen and washing agent. Such detection and adjustment are not disclosed or contemplated by Rossin et al. particularly since his is a catalytic, not a combustion process.

Moreover, although the composition of process waste gases are generally known when they result from a single process, the process gases that result from a series of processes is much more complex. The present invention contemplates this and as a result selects from a spectrum of selected harmful substances as opposed to Rossin et al., which discloses a catalytic process for only one substance, perfluoroalkanes.

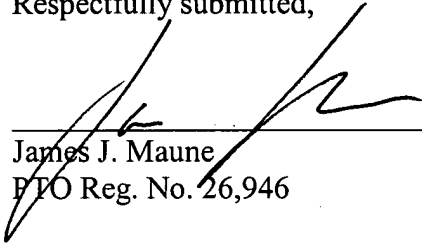
Furthermore, Kisters et al. describes a process and apparatus for the absorptive removal of pollutants from waste gases. Continuous adjustments are necessary in Kisters et al. in view of the continuous changes in operating conditions. As a result, Kisters et al. requires a continuous and automatic measurement of the concentration of the components in the gas. In contrast, the present invention is not directed at an absorptive removal of pollutants of combustion gases but is directed combustion decomposition of process gasses of varying content and post treatment of the combustion byproducts..

Therefore, in combination Rossin et al. and Kisters et al. do not disclose or teach the present invention. Moreover, a person of ordinary skill in the art would not have considered combining the disclosure of the cited references in the manner suggested by the Examiner.

Therefore, in view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 1-13 as obvious over U.S. Patent 6,069,291 (Rossin et al.) in view of U.S. Patent 4,229,411 (Kisters et al.).

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all pending claims 1-13 are
currently in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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